[25th February 1955

[*Note.*—**An asterisk (*) at the commencement of a speech indicates revision by the Member.**]

II.—MOTION UNDER RULE 40 OF THE MADRAS ASSEMBLY RULES *RE* UNREST THAT IS DEVELOPING IN THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY.

9-30 a.m. * SRI K. P. GOPALAN :—" Mr. Speaker, I have given notice, under rule 40 of the Madras Assembly Rules, of the following motion to call the attention of the Minister to a matter of urgent public importance :—

' That the attention of the Minister be drawn to a matter of urgent public importance, viz., the unrest that is developing in the textile industry due to the failure of the Government to take action for the implementation of some of the favourable recommendations of the Tripartite Textile Enquiry Committee which led to a one-day protest strike in December last in Coimbatore and Salem. '

" Regarding this motion, I have to state that the Government constituted a Tripartite Enquiry Committee, as per G.O. No. 2670, Development Department, dated 9th June 1951, as per the directive of the Hon. Mr. Justice P. Rajagopalan. He gave directions that the disputes relating to work-loads, wage structure, leave facilities, etc., in the textile industry should be enquired into by the Government. As per his recommendations, the Government appointed a Tripartite Enquiry Committee consisting of two Government nominees, five representatives of the employers and five representatives of the workers. This Committee recorded the evidence of as many as 348 witnesses. They visited 79 mills and enquired into the conditions of labourers in the textile industry. The Government have also spent a large sum of money towards meeting the expenses of this Committee. One of the recommendations of this Committee is that the basic wage of a textile worker should be Rs. 30 and that fourteen mills be exempted from implementing this recommendation."

MR. SPEAKER :—" Let the hon. Member be brief in his statement."

SRI K. P. GOPALAN :—" According to the recommendation of Sri Venkatramayya, only Rs. 26 was recommended as the basic wage for textile workers. The Tripartite Enquiry Committee have divided the workers into skilled, unskilled, semi-skilled and workers doing special work and have recommended wages for each of the different groups of workers. They have also recommended a dearness allowance of Re. 0–3–3 per point as against Re. 0–3–0 recommended by Sri Venkatramayya and they have given exemption to 14 mills in the matter of implementation of this recommendation. About 40 unanimous recommendations have been made by the Committee. The Committee has also made a recommendation for the constitution of regional committees to fix work-loads, wage structure, leave facilities, etc. Since yesterday, I understand reliably that a conference of textile workers including representatives of A.I.T.U.C. and H.M.S. is meeting here in this city to discuss these matters. The I.N.T.U.C. also has sent a message to that Conference. A lot of discontent is prevailing

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on account of the failure of the Government to implement the unanimous recommendations of the Tripartite Enquiry Committee among the textile workers.

" In order to maintain industrial peace in this country and in order to meet the just demands of the textile workers, I request the Government to accept the recommendations of the Tripartite Enquiry Committee which they themselves appointed. I hope the Government will see their way to implement the recommendations of the Committee. With these few words, I move my motion."

* THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" Sir, I would like to make the following statement with reference to this motion. As has been pointed out by the hon. Member, the Hon. Mr. Justice P. Rajagopalan who was appointed as a Special Industrial Tribunal in the dispute in Sri Meenakshi Mills, Limited, Madurai, directed that the disputes relating to work-loads, wage structure, leave facilities, etc., should be decided on an 'industry-*cum*-regional' basis for all textile mills in this State and not merely with reference to any particular unit of the industry. With reference to this directive, the Government constituted a Tripartite Enquiry Committee consisting of two Government nominees, five representatives of the employers and five representatives of the workers to examine and enquire into the existing terms and conditions of employment of the workers in the textile mills in the State. The report of the Committee was printed and published early in 1954. The report contains as many as 98 recommendations. Unanimous decisions were reached on some of the recommendations while there was disagreement between the representatives of the employers and of the employees in regard to some recommendations. Representations were received by the Government requesting them to set up Regional Tripartite Committees and also to implement the majority recommendations of the Committee.

" The Government examined in detail the question of implementation of the recommendations of the Committee. The Tripartite Textile Enquiry Committee was not appointed in pursuance of any statutory requirement. There is no law under which the recommendations, even if they be unanimous, could be implemented. At best, the recommendations can help Industrial Tribunal to pass an award or to give a decision if a dispute arose in a textile mill. The Government considered that the ability to implement the recommendations depended on the financial capacity of each mill, which varied from mill to mill, and that any attempt to enforce the recommendations regardless of the capacity of each unit, might result in the closure of marginal units and consequent unemployment. The Government, therefore, decided not to set up Regional Tripartite Committees or to enforce any of the other favourable recommendations. If however the workers have genuine grievances regarding the conditions of employment in any

mill, the workers concerned may take up the matter for redress following the normal channel for the settlement of the disputes under the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947. The Government have also explained the position by a Press Note.

"From the above, it will be observed that whether the recommendations of the Committee are favourable or otherwise, the Government cannot enforce them."

(Sri S. C. C. Anthony Pillai and Dr. K. B. Menon rose in their seats.)

MR. SPEAKER :—"No hon. Member will be allowed to speak on this motion."

DR. K. B. MENON :—"May I know whether the Hon. Speaker has forgotten a notice that I have given?"

MR. SPEAKER :—"I have not forgotten it. I will take it up on Monday or Tuesday."

III.—ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE HON. SPEAKER.

MESSAGE FROM THE COUNCIL.

MR. SPEAKER :—"I have to announce to the House that I have received a message, dated the 24th February 1955, from the Hon. Chairman, Madras Legislative Council, transmitting a copy of the Madras Indebted Agriculturists (Repayment of Debts) Bill, 1955 (L.A. Bill No. II of 1955), as passed and agreed to by the Council on the 24th February 1955, without any amendment and signed by him."

* SRI S. C. C. ANTHONY PILLAI :—"Sir, the Hon. Minister for Labour has made a very important statement . . ."

MR. SPEAKER :—"Under the rules, I cannot allow any further discussion. If the hon. Member wants to have any further information, let him put a short-notice question and I will allow it."

* SRI S. C. C. ANTHONY PILLAI :—"May I request for an half-hour debate on the statement made by the Hon. Minister."

MR. SPEAKER :—"No half-hour debate is allowed on motion under rule 40 of the Assembly Rules."